

The Principia.

First Principles in Religion, Morals, Government, and the Economy of Life

VOLUME I.

NEW-YORK SATURDAY MAY 12 1866

NO. 24

The Principia

PROSPECTUS.

THE AMERICAN OLIGARCHY—WHEREIN LIES ITS
STRENGTH?
NUMBER SIX.

CASTE IN AMERICA. FURTHER PARTICULARS.

It is time to look more directly at the several distinct American castes, as already established. Primarily, there appeared to be but two: the slaveholders and the slaves. Almost instantly, however, there was seen to be an intermediate caste, the non-slaveholders who were not slaves. These may have supposed themselves on an equality with the slaveholders. But their subordinate status soon became apparent, the distance between them has been widening ever since, and must continue to widen, till slaveholding is done away. Every year, the *Chetere* caste takes a still higher position, and the *Bice*, or *Yaysa* a still lower one. Our national politics clearly indicate this.

A fourth caste in America, as before noticed, is found in the so-called free people of color, who are composed of emacipated slaves, fugitives from slavery, or the descendants of such, and thus connected with the slaves.

A fifth caste is seen in the non-slaveholding whites of the slave States, including the "red hatters," as now distinguished from the non-slaveholding whites of the non-slaveholding States.

A fifth dimension of scale has sprung from the two mutually exclusive uses of *al-shaykh* and *abd*, and, like the others that have been considered, is by no means a trifling one. The *new* original pair. We allude to the distinction of color and race, a distinction reaching a dose between all the other races, and in a manner, reducing them all into two.

As the African race of sable hue, were primarily, and have been generally, the slaves, a corresponding degradation attaches to that race and hue. And as the slaveholders have generally been white, a corresponding dignity, the comparison, attaches to that race and color, inasmuch, that in process of time, the contrast has become so marked that the Supreme Court of the nation, has adventured to declare that the black man "has no rights which a white man is bound to respect." The wide-spread astonishment at this declaration, attests that the complete establishment of this caste, has been but just now effected, being of later maturity than the preceding ones, and of the same nature—that, in other words, the caste of color and race, originated in slavery; and consequently that slavery did not, as some suppose, arise from the previously existing caste of race and color.

Had it so happened that in America, as in some countries, the slaves and slaveholders had been of the same race and color; or if the blacks had been the slaveholders and the whites the slaves, there would have been no degradation attached to the African lineage or complexion—as there is not, in Russia, where both the nobles and the serfs are whites, and of the same race, or *general division* of the one human family.

In Massachusetts, some time during the past century, a colored man was a member of the colonial or Sons of Liberty lodge, representing a community of nearly white inhabitants; and another colored man, Rev. Samuel Haynes, was the much beloved and respected pastor of a church and congregation of whites, and in high esteem among his clerical brethren.

Colored children, too, in New England and the State of New York, within the memory of the writer, attended the common schools, on terms of perfect equality and companionship with the children of the most respectable white citizens, nor was any objection made to it, until some time after the existence of the American Colonization Society, which was organized in 1816, a project planned by slaveholders, for the removal of a caste deemed dangerous to the stability of their supremacy. And when, in 1833, a persecution was commenced in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and other States, against teachers of colored schools the movement was made by friends of the Colonization Society, and much to the astonishment of a large portion of the people of the non-slaveholding States.

Acts of Legislation against them in several of the free States, and the custom of excluding them from vehicles of public conveyance, are also of comparatively modern origin, and have marked with precision, the several successive stages of the increasing control of the slaveholding majority over the nation at large, and over all the several States, whether eastern, with or without which the culture is compared. In exact proportion to the increase of the slave population, the hostility holding within the States of the slave, has increased along with time.

Y If there be a theology, besides orthodoxy, not tinged with gradualism, let it come upon the stage, and distinctly show itself. The question is *not*, whether the law of tolerance is not binding on men not totally depraved, but whether, if presented it, in our "Theologians and Reformers" [whom I have just named] it would not radically wrong can properly be called upon to effect a radical change? The question is not whether

